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London CANADA

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Public asked to practice caution around ice and water in winter

London is fortunate to hold within its boundaries the Thames River and other bodies of water including, ponds and lakes, which provide recreational opportunities to residents and contribute to a healthy natural environment for our City. Although, these ponds, lakes and rivers are a precious resource to the City and it's residents, they do pose a potential safety risk when only partially frozen in winter. Fortunately, there have been no recent serious incidents involving unsafe ice in London.

Members of London Fire Department's Water and Ice Rescue Team demonstrated today how unpredictable and dangerous the ice can be on the many ponds, lakes, and rivers in the area and the difficulties in escaping should someone fall through the ice.

Ice colour can be an indication of its strength; clear blue ice is the strongest, white opaque is much weaker, and grey ice is unsafe because it indicates the presence of un-frozen water.
To ensure safety, the minimum thickness for each of these activities should be:

- walking or skating 15cm
- skating parties or games 20 cm
- snowmobiling 25 cm (clear blue ice)

To remain prepared when called upon for action, the London Fire Department's Water and Ice Rescue Team undergo training scenarios which mimic emergency situations.

Additional information on ice safety can be obtained from the Ministry of Natural Resources website at www.ontario.ca/mnr and the Canadian Red Cross website at www.redcross.ca. For emergency's involving water and ice related incidents, contact the London Fire Department by dialing 911.